REMARKS

The last Office Action has been carefully considered.

In the Office Action the Examiner indicated that claims 1-6 and 11-13 are rejectable under 35 U.S.C. 103 over the Applicant's Admitted Prior Art in view of the patent to Weber.

Claim 7 is rejected as above, further in view of the patent to Viebach.

Claims 8-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as above and further in view of the patent to Pelzer.

In the Examiner's opinion the present invention is defined in the corresponding claims should be considered as obvious from the combination of the references.

Applicant has carefully considered the Examiner's arguments. It is respectfully submitted that in the applicant's opinion the present invention patentably distinguishes over the art.

Turning now to the references and in particular to the patent to Weber, it can be seen that this reference discloses a drive-motor control system for starting and stopping a belt conveyor. The belt conveyor is only equipped with one drive motor 6 for driving the whole belt conveyor. A second motor 7 is provided only to control the stress of the conveyor belt. As the belt conveyor is only driven by one single motor, asynchronously driving, which is a very important feature of present invention as defined in claim 1, step b, can not be performed with the belt conveyor known from this reference. It is believed that this reference therefore does not teach these new features of present invention.

The patent to Weber discloses a method of controlling the tension of the conveyor belt by laterally moving a tension drum 5 by means of a second motor. The increase in the conveyor belt tension during acceleration of the conveyor belt can be lowered by moving the tension drum.

In contrast, in accordance with the present invention more than two (in practice at least three) motor drives are provided, which are driven synchronously under normal operation conditions. Only for the purpose of increasing or reducing the slack of the transporting chain in the portion

6

between the two drives, one of these two drives is driven slower or faster than the other one. During these procedures, the transporting chain is moving substantially with a constant speed without acceleration or deceleration. After the adjusting procedure, the two motor drives are synchronized again, and a transporting chain is further transported with the pre-determined slack or tension, which is an optimum for the respective operation conditions.

The patent to Weber discloses a tensioning apparatus which is made of a tensioning motor 7 connected through a worm-gear drive 8 to a rope drum 9 having a rope 10 secured to the tension roller 5. This apparatus is very complex and expensive. This is necessary, if one has only one drive motor like the patent to Weber. It is an advantage of the present invention that such tensioning apparatus is obsolete when one uses the inventive adjusting method in connection with the treatment machine with at least two (or better more than two) drive motors.

Furthermore, the step d of claim 1 of the present invention is not disclosed in the patent to Weber as well, since one drive motor can not be driven synchronous, because there is no other motor to synchronize this. Also the step i can not be performed with the drive-controlled system

disclosed in the patent to Weber because already the preceding steps could not have been completed.

It is therefore believed to be clear that the new features of present invention which are defined in claim 1 as well as in a second independent claim 14 which defines more than two drives, is not disclosed in the patent to Weber and can not be derived from it as a matter of obviousness.

As for the other references which were applied in combination with the patent to Weber, it is respectfully submitted that they also do not teach the new features of present invention as defined in claims 1 and 14. It is submitted that the combination of the references first of all can not be considered as obvious. On the other hand, even if the combination is made, the present invention can not be derived from the combined teachings of the references, since none of the references teaches the new features of present invention as now defined in claims 11 and 14.

Claims 11 and 14 should be considered as patentably distinguishing over the art and should be allowed.

Reconsideration and allowance of present application is most respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner require or consider it advisable that the specification, claims and/or drawings be further amended or corrected in formal respects in order to place this case in condition for final allowance, then it is respectfully requested that such amendments or corrections be carried out by Examiner's Amendment, and the case be passed to issue. Any costs involved should be charged to the deposit account of the undersigned (No. 19-4675). Alternatively, should the Examiner feel that a personal discussion might be helpful in advancing this case to allowance, he is invited to telephone the undersigned (at 631-549-4700).

Respectfully submitted,

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